



A Vision for Sustainable Tourism at Komodo National Park

Komodo National Park was established in the 1980s primarily as a park for protection and observations of komodo dragons. However, the park's great natural beauty and its excellent snorkelling and diving sites began to attract tourists who were interested in more than just the komodo dragons. Park management developed the following vision:

The future image of Komodo National Park will not only be identical with the charismatic features of the komodo dragons, but the very fascinating uniqueness of the savanna ecosystem and underwater life as well. It will be easy and comfortable for visitors coming to Komodo National Park to arrange their travel, including booking entrance tickets to the National Park. Komodo National Park will implement a ticketing system accommodating user pay principles through conservation fee, the results of which will be used to fund the professional and independent management of Komodo National Park. Tickets of Komodo National Park will be attractively designed and made of high quality worth serving as tokens of remembrance for visitors.

Visitors of Komodo National Park entering through Labuan Bajo can have preliminary orientations at Philemon Information Center. Visitors coming directly to the area can have their orientation at Loh Liang or Loh Buaya. The information package of Komodo National Park will also be available in CDs and printed media. Orientation and interpretive programs can be presented outside the information center on requests. All visitor centers or information centers are managed by professionals who have received interpretive trainings. Movies are periodically shown at Philemon Information Center presenting films supporting the interpretive themes of Komodo National Park.

To enter the area of Komodo National Park, visitors can use sea transportation, including local tour boats – certified by Indonesian sea travel safety standards and holding operational permits issued by Komodo National Park. Strict regulation and monitoring will be applied regarding the number of tour boats moored at the visitor pier. Visitors can also directly enter the area by helicopter, landing at a designated location. Activities and services of nature tourism at Komodo National Park will be professionally operated and provided. Activities and services – including facilities and infrastructures – that will be provided for visitors at popular sectors such as Ioh Liang, Pantai Merah (Pink Beach) and Loh Buaya, will be managed by a private business company (PT Putri Naga Komodo). Meanwhile, activities and services at other sectors will be continuously updated to meet the required standard through a collaborative management system.

Considering that several wildlife species inhabiting the National Park, such as the komodo dragons, poisonous snakes, feral buffaloes and horses, and wild pigs, are dangerous for visitors, it will be required that at all times visitors doing land activities in the park will be accompanied by trained park rangers, who are also competent as

interpreters. Besides by park rangers, visitors could also be guided by interpreters certified as nature guides of different levels and licensed to operate as interpreters in Komodo National Park. In this way, visitors could learn a lot about natural history, obtain nature comprehension and life inspiration.

As token of remembrance of their valuable visit to Komodo National Park, visitors can purchase various interesting souvenirs at specific places designed according to the building style of West Manggarai. Souvenir merchants, as well as interpreters and other service providers, wear identity tags and sell their goods in a friendly and honest manner in accordance with the ethical codes jointly agreed upon by stakeholders and the National Park. This is a form of commitment to involve the local people in the development of nature tourism.

The management of Komodo National Park, especially the management of its visitors, will be committed to serve visitors' needs of natural life experiences in a responsible way. All nature tourism activities – diving, snorkeling, hiking, etc. – and services will be undertaken in accordance with responsible guidelines of activities and tour operations. Visitor complaints and suggestions will be correctly accepted, channeled, integrated and responded by the management. The responsible operation of nature tourism will be undertaken through various efforts, starting with systematic monitoring of the impacts of nature tourism to the implementation of a fining system on violators of rules applied by Komodo National Park.

To establish a professional and independent Komodo National Park, within the next five years, every effort will be undertaken gradually with clear benchmarks, while still keeping the competence of an adaptive management. The collaborative management will make Komodo National Park a model of appropriate management of national park and World Heritage Sites within the scope of developing countries.

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